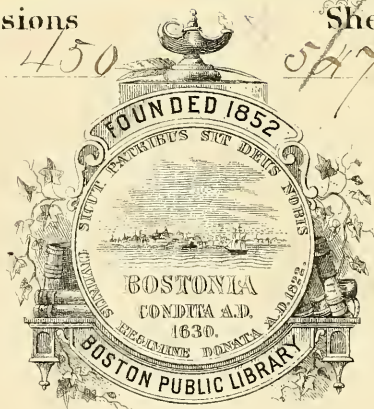


Accessions

361,450

Shelf No.

5475.57



Received. Mar. 17, 1885.









3034

PAMPHLETS.
Christ.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
Boston Public Library

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

OF

THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

BY

REV DAVID B. FORD, A. M.

SOUTH SCITUATE, MASS.

Reprinted from the Bibliotheca Sacra for July, 1860.

ANDOVER:

WARREN F. DRAPER.

BOSTON: GOULD AND LINCOLN.

1860.

4

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

OF

THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

BY

REV. DAVID B. FORD, A. M.

SOUTH SCITUATE, MASS.

Reprinted from the Bibliotheca Sacra for July, 1860.

AND OVER:

WARREN F. DRAPER.

BOSTON: GOULD AND LINCOLN.

1860.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860,
BY WARREN F. DRAPER,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

OF

THE DEITY OF CHRIST.¹

It is a question of our Saviour's asking, and therefore of some importance : What think ye of Christ ? Whose son is he ? The scriptures tell us, in reply, that he is both the son

¹ The reader has in this Treatise a brief compend only of the more important Scriptural evidence of the Deity of Christ. It will be seen, moreover, that the evidence adduced is mainly derived from the *New Testament*, since its testimony on this point is confessedly more full, direct and conclusive. Although this treatise was not written with any feelings of doctrinal indifference, the author yet hopes that it is not entirely a one-sided, partisan performance, but that it may be deemed, on the whole, a fair and impartial presentation of the scriptural evidence touching the point in question. The doctrine concerning the person of Christ formed the subject of the first great controversy in the Christian church, and this controversy has reached even to our times. We trust, however, the day is not far distant, when all who hold to the inspiration of the New Testament Scriptures, will cease to preach and to believe in a created and merely human Saviour. Especially in this beloved Commonwealth, the cradle and home of the Pilgrims, the hearts of the children, we may hope, will ere long turn to the faith of their fathers, and the doctrine of Christ's eternal power and Godhead will once more be proclaimed in all the churches here planted by our Puritan ancestors.

of David and the Lord of David; both the son of man, and the only-begotten Son of God. It is well known that there exists, in the New Testament, a wide diversity of representation in regard to the person and character of our Lord. Hence a large majority of the Christian church, in all ages, have been led, in supposed accordance with the scriptures, to ascribe to the person of Christ a two-fold nature, the human and the divine. That Christ had an existence previous to his human birth, and that he possessed a nature higher than our own, is evident from those passages which speak of his various manifestations under the old dispensation (John 12 : 41. 1 Cor. 10 : 4 (9). 1 Pet. 1 : 11); of his existence before Abraham (John 8 : 58); and before the world was (John 17 : 5, 24); before all created things (John 1 : 3. Col. 1 : 15, 17. 1 Cor. 8 : 6); even with God, in the beginning (John 1 : 1). Of like import, also, are those numerous passages which affirm that he came (into the world) from God, from the Father, from above, from heaven, "where he was before;" that, with us, he partook of flesh and blood; that he was made flesh; that he came in the flesh; was manifested in the flesh; was made in the likeness of men; made like unto his brethren; and was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh; that he was born of a woman; and was according to the flesh (in contrast with his higher nature) a descendant of David and the Jewish fathers.¹ All these passages, with others which are supposed to ascribe to Christ the distinctive titles, attributes, and works of Deity, either expressly assert or fairly imply this two-fold nature, and are wholly meaningless and absurd on any other supposition. Even De Wette (on John 17 : 5) thus remarks : "Two ideas are here combined: that of the λόγος ἄσαρκος and that of the λόγος ἐνσαρκος, who, after his incarnation, his sufferings and death, is exalted to divine honor; as also there are, in general, two views presented of Christ, which yet are never wholly separated, namely, the theosophic-speculative, descending view, according to which he is God incar-

¹ See John 8 : 42; 13 : 3; 16 : 27, 28; 3 : 13, 31; 6 : 38, 51, 62; 1 : 14, 15; Eph. 4 : 9, 10; 1 Cor. 15 : 47; Heb. 2 : 14, 17; 5 : 7; 1 John 4 : 2; 2 John 1 : 7; 1 Tim. 3 : 16; Rom. 8 : 3; Phil. 2 : 7; Gal. 4 : 4; Rom. 1 : 3; 9 : 5, et al.

nate ; and the historico-religious, ascending, according to which he is man deified."

Among those passages which plainly teach the preëxistence and divinity of Christ, the prologue of John's Gospel stands preëminent ; and to this, we would now direct our attention. In considering these verses, we have a special advantage, inasmuch as they are confessedly unattended with glosses and various readings. The construction, also, is simple, and the words are capable of but one rendering: that, namely, which is given in our English version — "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, etc. Some persons, however, have regarded the X Logos (Word) not as a hypostasis or person, but rather as a personification particularly of the divine *wisdom* or *reason*, and refer, in illustration, to similar personifications in Prov. viii. and in the apocryphal Sirach and Wisdom of Solomon. To this view there are many weighty objections : 1. The term Logos, though frequently signifying *reason*, in the classics, does not occur, in this sense, in the New Testament (De Wette, Meyer). 2. Such rhetorical or poetical personifications, appropriate enough in the proverbs of the wise man, or in the book of "wisdom," are yet wholly foreign to the plain and simple style of the New Testament, and especially of the Gospels. 3. If the beloved disciple had seen fit to personify any of the divine attributes or qualities, he would, more naturally, have chosen for this purpose the *love* of God, as manifested in the gift and the person of his Son ; while such a personification and apotheosis of wisdom would, manifestly, have favored that Gnosticism which he is, commonly and rightly, supposed to have combated in his writings. 4. Something more is needed, of the Logos, than a mere rhetorical figure, in order satisfactorily to explain those passages, particularly numerous in this Gospel, which explicitly teach the ante-mundane existence of Christ. 5. If we have a personification of wisdom (or of power) before us, it is exceedingly awkward and wholly irrelevant, and cannot be carried out with any congruency or harmony with the context. To substitute wisdom as a personified attribute, in the place of the Logos, especially in

X Logos, "The creature, declaratory,
injunctive word (of God)" Alford

vs. 1, 4, 10—12, 14, would, if it resulted in anything besides absurdity and nonsense, yield a system of doctrines not at all Johannean, nor accordant with the analogies of scripture.¹ Hence all the more distinguished commentators on this Gospel, at the present day, assign to the Logos of John a hypostatic personality.

We now return to an explanation of the text : “ In the beginning was the Word ” (cf. 1 John 1 : 1). The phrase “ in the beginning,” has commonly been explained by a reference to the first verse of Genesis ; but though the same words occur, yet their meaning is very different. This phrase must always be interpreted by its adjuncts, as a simple reference to Acts 11 : 15 will abundantly show. In our verse the phrase, thus explained, signifies *from eternity* (comp. 17 : 5, 24). Our reasons for this view are the following : 1. John does not here assert that, in the beginning the Logos emanated from the Father, or was begotten, or was created, or that he began to be (not even *ἐγένετο* is used), but that he *was*. This form of the verb is also employed in the kindred expression, 1 John 1 : 1, and in the formula : “ who is, and who *was*, and who is to come ” (Rev. 1 : 4), where it denotes the past eternity of Jehovah. 2. Not only was the Logos in the beginning, but he was in the beginning *with God*, and therefore co-eternal with Him. God was never *ἄλογος*, never without the Word. Had it been stated, in Gen. 1 : 1, that the heavens and the earth were, in the beginning, with God, we should, most naturally at least, have inferred that they existed from eternity. 3. When, to all this, the thought of the third clause is added, that the Logos was God, we cannot, from the point of view of a Christian theism, doubt that the Logos is eternal. Wholly inapplicable, therefore, to Christ, in his Logos-nature, is the Arian phrase : *ἦν. ποτε*

¹ The Holy Spirit, as the revealer of divine truth and the enlightener of man's understanding, might, more appropriately than the Son, be designated as *wisdom*. Thus Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, A. D. 170—180, speaks of the three days preceding the creation of the heavenly luminaries as “ types of the Triad of God and his Word and his *Wisdom*.” This, by the way, is the first recorded mention of the divine *Trinity*.

ὅτε οὐκ ἦν—"there was a period when he was not." 4. The Logos is not a created being. Christ, as the Logos, was not begotten even; for this idea of generation, though predicable of the Son, cannot properly be predicated of the Logos. It was only by making the Son identical with the Logos, that men began to speak of the "eternal generation" of the Word. That the Logos was not a created being, we learn in the third verse: "all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." If all things were made by him, and not one created thing was made without him; then, manifestly, he is either self-created, which is an absurdity; or is, himself, uncreated; and, if uncreated, then eternal. In Rev. 22:13. 1:17. 2:8 (1:8?), Christ calls himself the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last—epithets which are used, elsewhere, to denote the eternity of Jehovah. Paul, in Col. 1:17, affirms that Christ is before all things; and this priority has reference, not to rank, but to time (so Meyer, De Wette, and others). The tense of the verb, here, denotes a permanent state, and hence includes the past with the present.

the world
vs 10

There are two passages, however, which show, as some suppose, that Christ is a created being; but which, on the contrary, entirely harmonize with the texts already adduced. These are Col. 1:15 and Rev. 3:14, where Christ is called the first-born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God. These words, we allow, do not, in themselves, forbid the idea that Christ himself is included in "the creation." Hence "the first-born of every creature," has been regarded, by some, as equivalent to *first-created*. But this view is neither supported by the context, nor by the "analogy of faith." The text before us (Col. 1:15) has, as we suppose, special reference to the λόγος ἑνσαρκος, the θεάνθρωπος of Origen, the incarnate Word, the God-man. As such, he is called the image of God, the first-born (not first-created) of every creature. The term *first-born* not only indicates a priority as to time, but also very frequently conveys the idea of superiority or excellence (comp. Ex. 4:22. Ps. 89:27. Rom. 8:29); an idea derived from the primogenitureship of

"begotten before any created thing!"

Jewish antiquity. As Christ, in the first clause of the verse, is called the image of God, the thought of his supereminence over all created things (ver. 18), would naturally follow. This leads the apostle, also, in the next verse, to make such particular mention of the thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers of heaven and earth, all of which were created by Christ and for Him. With this idea, however, there may be connected the kindred one of Christ's *ante-mundane* existence (so Meyer, Olshausen, comp. ver. 17). And this leads us to the principal objection which the context furnishes against reckoning Christ with created beings: "for in him [as the condition or ground] all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible . . . all things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things subsist (vs. 16, 17). If Christ, therefore, be the Creator, upholder, and end, of *all* created things, in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, then is he, himself, uncreated and eternal.

This passage will serve to explain the kindred expression, in Rev. 3:14, "the beginning of the creation of God. After what has been said above, we need only remark that ἀρχή, both in classic and in scripture Greek, has a much wider signification than our word *beginning*. It is often used actively and concretely, and thus denotes origin, magistracy, rulers, etc. (comp. Luke 12:11. Eph. 1:21. Col. 2:10.) In the plural, it is generally rendered principalities (potentates) in our version. This word is employed in the significant phrase "the *beginning* and the end," as the designation of the eternal and unchangeable One. Here it may signify the head or lord of creation (Rev. 1:5), or the cause or ground; or, it may be regarded as equivalent to the "first born of every creature." De Wette, in comparing this passage with Col. 1:15, 16, remarks: "Christ, according to the representation of the Apocalypticist, stands at the head of the whole creation, and is the Cause, Ground, and End of the same."

Certainly the Greek language affords fitter terms and phrases to express the idea that Christ was the first created being than the ambiguous ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, if such

was the idea intended to be conveyed. Besides, the unsuitableness of this thought to the connection, must be apparent to every mind.

We pass, now, to consider the second clause : the Logos was with God (cf. 1 John 1 : 2). Hence, says the Arian at once, the Logos cannot be the same as God. This reasoning, though plausible, is too hasty, and does not rest on a sufficiently broad foundation. A simple glance at the next clause is sufficient to make us circumspect and cautious. Each proposition, here, must be explained in the light of the other; and the more obscure one, by that which is less so. We must not, therefore, make the distinction between the Logos and God so broad and absolute, as to intrench on the substantial verity of the statement which immediately follows. The meaning of the clause before us turns, mainly, upon the force of the preposition *with*; but this is left by the apostle undefined. We suppose that *πρός*, here, indicates a closer relation than *παρά* or *μετά* (see, however, *παρὰ σοί*, 17 : 5), and denotes the most intimate internal union. We are not, probably, to conceive of this relation or union in a sensuous manner, as any outward personal fellowship. Nothing, we think, is more abhorrent to right reason than the Arian anthropomorphic conception of a created finite being associated in personal fellowship with the infinite and omnipresent Spirit as his counsellor or assistant. Many, with Schleiermacher, have assigned to the preposition, here, the force of *in*; the Logos was in God. So our Saviour frequently represents himself as in the Father, and the Father in him. Some such conception as this lay at the basis of the *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος* of the early Fathers; i. e. the unspoken word; and thus the immanent thought or reason of God. For ourselves, without desiring to remove the distinction between the Logos and God, which is certainly implied in the text, we should wish to make *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν* express, or at least not to preclude, the essential oneness of the Logos with God, and thus his consubstantiality with the Father. It were easy to explain this clause in entire harmony with Sabellianism, provided that this attractive theory could only answer the fair

demands of the Christian economy. Instead, however, of doing this, it makes the plainest and soberest representations of the New Testament a pretence and a solemn farce. Adopting, therefore, the language of the creeds, we must, while not dividing the substance, be careful also not to confound the Persons. *In medio tutissimus ibis*, although this middle course, as Chrysostom long since well represented, is not without its difficulties (see Hagenbach's History of Doctrines, vol. I. p. 272).

We come, now, to the final clause of the verse: "the Logos was God." Some persons, in proving the divinity of Christ, do not lay very much stress upon the simple fact that he is called God; since this term, as they suppose, is sometimes applied to created and inferior beings. We join issue with such, and affirm that nowhere, in the New Testament, do the inspired writers, in sober earnestness and with implicit faith, ascribe the name of God to any created being. We deny, moreover, that the term *God* (or Jehovah, Deut. 19:17) is distinctively and absolutely applied to any priests, judges, or kings, even in the Old Testament. In the few instances where אֱלֹהִים is rendered "judges," in our version (Ex. 21:6. 22:8. etc.), the Septuagint rightly gives a literal translation of the Hebrew: *before God*; and, in one instance, very properly: *to the tribunal of God*. All biblical scholars allow that the name *God*, in the Old Testament, is never bestowed upon any *single* individual; and the most any one can affirm is, that it was bestowed only relatively upon that body of men who, in their official capacity, stood as the representatives of Jehovah-God on earth. But however this may be, we have, at present, only to do with the *usus loquendi* of the New Testament.

Certain commentators have, likewise, asserted that the Logos cannot be the supreme God, since Θεός, in this clause, is without the article. We know, indeed, that Philo, and, after him, Origen, made a broad distinction between ὁ Θεός and Θεός; reducing the latter to a mere δεύτερος Θεός, a secondary god. To this, however, we reply, that the alleged distinction confessedly does not hold, in the New Tes-

ment ; and that, to interpret the writings of John by the theories of the Platonizing Jew, would be well nigh as bad as the "reading of inspired truth through heathen glasses." One has but to glance at vs. 6, 13, 18, of this very chapter, to be convinced that Θεός, in a similar construction, designates the invisible and absolute God. The absence of the article, in our clause, simply shows that Θεός, in its present position, must be taken as the predicate. Possibly, also, as some have thought, it may point out the Deity as substance, and not as subject ; though even this distinction is not founded on New Testament usage. Winer, however, in his *Idioms of the New Testament*, still asserts that the article could not have been omitted if John would designate the Logos as ὁ Θεός (the supreme God) ; because, in this connection, the simple Θεός was ambiguous. It would seem, then, that after all there *is* a difference between Θεός and ὁ Θεός, in New Testament usage. The learned writer, however, does not, for the best of reasons, refer to any examples in which this difference is indicated ; and to imagine such a distinction, in the clause before us, is, to say the least, simply begging the question. We need only to remark, further, that the acknowledged usage of the New Testament will not permit us to render Θεός *a god* ; or to make it equivalent to Θεῶς, *divine*.¹ Influenced by these established results, many impugnors of the divinity of Christ have been compelled to allow that the Logos stands in such intimate relation to God, that he may be called God. But even this is not enough. The Logos not only *may* be called God ; not only is he called God ; but the apostle declares that the Logos was God, even that God by whom all things were made.

¹ Lücke, the learned and able commentator on John's writings, in his comments on this passage, arrives at substantially the same results which we have above indicated. But having reached them, he throws them all away in view of "the impossibility of conceiving of a double personality in Christ." He regards the scripture representation of the Logos as "only a temporary form of thought," and says : "We are allowed to distinguish the sense in which John understood those expressions from that in which Christ used them." With such a view of the scriptures, we should think it hardly worth the while for a man to expend in their investigation so much of learning and labor.

Having thus considered the grammatical difficulties, we come, now, to the theological objections. The principal objection urged against the regarding of the Logos as the supreme God is this, that it annihilates all difference between the Logos and God, and thus makes the Son one and the same with the Father. We are here willing to confess our ignorance, and acknowledge that *we* do not know whether *all* distinction is thus removed or not. We fully believe, however, that a distinction, in some respects, still remains; while, at the same time, we rejoice to know that, in some other respects, the Logos and the infinite God *are* one and the same!

Objections are not, commonly, all on one side of a question; and *we* have some very weighty ones against that Arian view, which makes the Logos, though the Creator of all things, yet himself merely a δευτερος θεός, an inferior Deity, and a created being. Here are palpable inconsistencies, which need no refutation. Such an intermediate demigod, between God and the world, has no existence in the scriptures, and can have no place in a Christian theology or a sound philosophy. Gnosticism, indeed, asserts that the demiurgus or world-creator is not the supreme God, but a subordinate, inferior being; while the New Testament, on the other hand, declares that he who built all things is God (Heb. 3:3,4).

We would here also remark, in reference to John's characterizing of the Logos, that nothing is said of the emanation or generation, or derived existence of the Logos, and nothing of his dependence on, or subordination to, the Father. These are the unwarranted concessions of some who, while professedly holding to the absolute equality of the Son with the Father, have yet denied it in words. Many of the early Fathers maintained that the Son existed, from all eternity, in the substance of the Father, and was begotten of that substance; so that, in the language of the Nicene creed, he was "very God of very God," an expression well nigh unintelligible, and savoring more of paganism than of Christian theism. To affirm that the Logos existed, from all eternity, in the

X
This regards X as Son rather than as Logos. Both views are necessary.

substance of the Father, and was of that substance, may be well enough ; but if by the “ generation of the Logos,” any have meant to deny his absolute *aseitas* or self-existence and independence, then we must, in view of John’s representation of the Logos, wholly dissent from that opinion. Not here, certainly, do we learn that the Father is the fountain and original of the whole Deity, or that he communicated his own divine essence to the Son. The Logos of John is no *κτίσμα*, nor *ποίημα*, nor *γέννημα* even ; but the *αὐτόθεος*, the eternal and self-existent God.

But what has all this, which thus far has been said of the Logos, to do with the divinity of *Christ*? In reply to this question, the apostle, in ver. 14, tells us that the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us, etc.* This, of course, cannot signify that the Logos was changed into flesh ; but it means that he entered into the sphere of humanity, took upon himself our human nature, and thus became “ the Son of man.” In vs. 10, 11, John has already spoken of the coming of the Logos into the world, and unto his own ; and elsewhere he often speaks of Christ’s coming from above, from heaven, and from the Father ; and, still more definitely, of his coming *in the flesh* (1 John 4 : 2. 2 John 7). The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews asserts that Christ partook of flesh and blood ; and Paul affirms that Christ was manifested in the flesh, was made in the likeness of men, and was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh (Heb. 2 : 14, 17. 1 Tim. 3 : 16. Phil. 2 : 7. Rom. 8 : 3). These parallel passages, together with the context itself (he dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, etc.), make it evident that John is here speaking of the Logos, as incarnate, in the person of Christ. It will be perceived, moreover, that no explanation is given of this mysterious union of natures in the Redeemer. No one, therefore, can justly demand of us to explain the *modus existendi* of the Logos, either with the Father, or in the person of Jesus. Had such an explanation been possible, or profitable, John the *theologian* would doubtless have performed the task for us.

The apostle, in this fourteenth verse, speaks, for the first time, of Christ as the only-begotten of (lit. from) the Father,

a phrase synonymous with "the Son of God." This title — Son of God — is used, in the New Testament, with considerable latitude of meaning ; but, as applied distinctively to Christ, and in contrast with "the Son of man," it has special reference to his divine nature. Neander, in his *Life of Christ*, p. 96, says : " the two titles — Son of God, and Son of man — bear evidently a reciprocal relation to each other ; and we conclude that, as Christ used the one to designate his human personality, so he employed the other to point out his divine ; and that, as he attached a sense far more profound than was common to the former title ; so he ascribed a deeper meaning than was usual to the latter." That the epithet in question has this deeper meaning, is evident from such passages as these : " No one hath seen God at any time ; the *only begotten* Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. No man knoweth the Son, but the Father. He that hath seen me [the Son], hath seen the Father. I and my Father are one. . . . Who was born of the seed of David, according to the flesh ; but powerfully exhibited as the Son of God, according to the Spirit of holiness ; i. e. as to his spiritual or higher nature. For to which of the angels said he, at any time : thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee" (John 1 : 18. 10 : 30. 14 : 9. Matt. 11 : 27. Rom. 1 : 4. Heb. 1 : 5) ? From John 5 : 18. 10 : 30—39. 19 : 7. Luke 22 : 71, we may learn how the Jews regarded as blasphemous his distinctive claim to divine sonship : Thou, being a man, say they, makest thyself God, and equal with God ; nor does our Saviour, anywhere, indicate that they misrepresented his meaning ; but he rather confirms the charge which they brought against him. The title "Son of God" must, of course, be taken as metaphorical or figurative. It has commonly, however, been regarded too much *more humano*, in a sensuous anthropomorphic manner, both by those who have maintained, and those who have opposed, the supreme divinity of Christ. In scripture use, the term *son*, as every biblical student well knows, denotes participation, resemblance or likeness, etc. So Christ, as the Son of man, was a partaker of our flesh and blood, and of our entire hu-

manity; and, as the Son of God, he possessed the entire nature and attributes of Deity. Hence the Logos may be called the Son of God, though when thus designated, special reference is had, as we suppose, to his mediatorial and redemptive work. The only-begotten of the Father, whose glory was beheld by the disciples and the world, was the λόγος σῶσαρκαωμένος, the incarnate Word.

We now propose to notice some other passages, in which Christ is commonly supposed to be called God. We shall not go through any lengthened processes of interpretation; but content ourselves, in general, with simply stating the results which are demanded or allowed by a just philology and sound criticism.

John 20:28. "Thomas answered and said unto him [Christ], my Lord and my God"! This was not an exclamation of surprise, but an address to Jesus, by Thomas, to whom Christ was *powerfully* exhibited as the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead, Rom. 1:4. Do we wonder, then, that under these circumstances Thomas should call him his Lord and his God? But would not the fact that the meek and lowly Saviour commended Thomas for his faith, be still more wonderful if he was not, in truth, what Thomas declared him to be?¹

Acts 20:28. . . "to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Comp. 1 John 3:16 Vulgate. The reading τοῦ Θεοῦ is found in the ancient Vatican manuscript, and in the Syriac and Vulgate versions, and is defended by several able critics; principally, however, on the ground of its accordance with New Testament usage (the expression "church of *God*," occurring eleven times in Paul's epistles, while the phrase "church of the *Lord*," does not elsewhere occur). The authority of the manuscripts, however, seems to favor this latter reading, and hence we cannot regard this text as decisive on the point in question. It is further alleged, in favor of τοῦ κυρίου, that the familiar formula would more easily be exchanged for the unusual one,

¹ *Agnovit Christus utique repulsurus, si falso dictus fuisset Deus.* Erasmus, as quoted by Meyer.

than the reverse. But to this we might reply that τοῦ κυρίου may have been substituted for τοῦ Θεοῦ, through dread or dislike of monophysitism, although even κυρίου, as Olshausen remarks, "commonly expresses the divine nature of Christ."¹

Rom. 9:5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is God over all, blessed forever." Innumerable conjectures and expedients have been resorted to, in the interpretation of this text, in order to evade its manifest ascription of supreme divinity to Christ. Most of those interpreters who disbelieve his divinity, make the latter clause an independent sentence, and refer the whole, as a doxology, to God the Father: "God, who is over all, be praised forever." But against this rendering there are insuperable objections: 1. There is no transition-particle, to indicate a change of subject, and the clause is connected with the preceding one in the closest manner possible (ὁ ὧν = ὃς ἐστί). 2. We should naturally expect, as an antithesis to κατὰ σάρκα (according to the flesh) some reference to the higher nature of Christ (comp. 1:3, 4). 3. Especially necessary is this reference here, since it is the rejection of Christ, Heaven's last and greatest gift to the Jews, which so overwhelms the apostle's soul with anguish that he himself would be willing to be anathema from Christ, provided this could secure their conversion. 4. According to the proposed rendering, however, Christ is not only not exalted, but is, as De Wette allows, almost wholly cast into the shade. 5. The ascription, therefore, of supreme dominion and eter-

¹ Even where the "one God the Father" is distinguished from the "one Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 8:6), the latter, nevertheless, seems to be placed on the side of Deity. The Father is called the "one God," not as contrasted with the Lord Jesus, but with the "gods many" of heathenism, and in like manner the "one Lord" is antithetic to the "lords many." The apostle here does not deny Lordship to the Father nor Deity to the Son. For these "gods many" and "lords many" are the "gods so called" of the heathen, and are the objects of their religious (idolatrous) worship. But for us Christians, the apostle would say, there is but one God and one Lord, from whom and by whom are all things and to whom alone worship is due. These remarks will serve to explain our Saviour's words (John 17:3): "This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Well may De Wette confess that this passage furnishes no proof against the divinity of Christ.

nal blessedness to God the Father, is not pertinent to the context, but directly opposes the scope of the passage; and no valid reason can be assigned or conceived for its occurrence in this connection. 6. Granting the appositeness of such a doxology, the construction of the passage will not well admit of this interpretation. The use of the participle is strange, and the position of *εὐλογητός* wholly unprecedented (see below).

The rendering adopted by De Wette, in his *Heilige Schrift*: “... from whom Christ descended according to the flesh, who is over all. God be praised forever,” is the only one, apart from that above given, which is deserving of any notice. Here, indeed, we have the needed antithesis to *κατὰ σάρκα*, and Christ is not entirely thrown into the shade. But against this rendering, it is justly objected: 1. That to close the sentence with *πάντων* is altogether abrupt and arbitrary. 2. The doxology to the Father has no sufficient ground in the context, and no immediate connection with it whatever. 3. *Θεός*, as the subject of the sentence, should here have the article. 4. The predicate *εὐλογητός* (blessed), both in the Septuagint and elsewhere in the New Testament, always precedes the subject, and should do so here, in case a doxology were intended.¹ De Wette, in his comments on this text, professes not to be fully satisfied either with his own or any other rendering, and regards a new reading as a *desideratum*. Of course, his only objection to the received reading is founded in a dogmatic interest. “If this passage,” says Kuapp, in his *Christian Theology*, p. 137, “were read in an unprejudiced manner, it would undoubtedly be referred, by every one, to Christ.” Usteri, Tholuck, Olshausen, and other modern interpreters, together with all the Fathers, likewise accord with this interpretation. Nor is the sentiment here advanced by the apostle, at all contradictory to his

¹ This construction occurs over thirty times in the Septuagint. The reading in Ps. 67: 20, as compared with the Hebrew, is manifestly corrupt. How easy for the apostle, if he wished to ascribe a doxology to God the Father, to have avoided all ambiguity by simply writing: *εὐλογητός ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς* or *εὐλογητός ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων*, κ. τ. λ.

views elsewhere expressed. He represents Christ as existing before all things, the author and sustainer of the universe, and often speaks of him as the Lord from heaven, the Lord of glory, and the Lord of all (comp. John 3 : 31). Elsewhere, indeed, he does not term Christ blessed, but John tells us that the redeemed, in heaven, cry with a loud voice : Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and *blessing*, forever and ever (Rev. 5 : 12, 13 ; see, also, Matt. 21 : 9). In the passages yet to be examined, we shall become still further acquainted with Paul's Christological views.

1 Tim. 3 : 16. "And confessedly great is the mystery of godliness : God was manifested in the flesh, justified in spirit," etc. It is disputed, here, whether the genuine *a prima manu* reading is $\overline{\text{Θ}}$ i. e. $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ (the horizontal line above indicating abbreviation), or $\theta\varsigma$ (who — referring to Christ understood), or θ (which — referring to mystery). In the Vulgate and in the Latin Fathers generally, *quod* (which) is found. Only four or five Greek manuscripts now exhibit $\theta\varsigma$, while over a hundred and seventy manuscripts (and among these, are some of the older ones) have $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$. *Manuscript* authority, then, is almost wholly in favor of the genuineness of the received reading.¹ This reading is also found in most of the Greek Fathers ; and, wherever $\theta\varsigma$ occurs, it is simply explicative on the part of the writer. The several predicates in our verse certainly require a definite subject ; and none is more appropriate, in this connection, than $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$. It is, indeed, objected that some of the succeeding clauses will not well agree with $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ as the subject. But in this respect, $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ stands on the same ground as the Logos in John 1 : 14 ; and

¹ The manuscripts A and C, which are frequently cited as favoring the reading $\theta\varsigma$ now have $\theta\varsigma$, i. e. $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$. But it is alleged from the character of the horizontal and transverse strokes, and from the color of the ink, that this was not the original *a prima manu* reading, but the work of a subsequent corrector. Allowing, however, that these lines in their present shape and appearance were not from the original copyist, it still remains to be proved that they have not been *retouched* or restored. For a full discussion of the genuineness of this text, see an able and interesting Article by Dr. Henderson in the *Biblical Repository*, Vol. 11. p. 1 seq.

✓ Later discoveries favor the reading $\theta\varsigma$,

in either verse the idea of the *incarnate* Logos, or *manifested* God, which is implied in the first clause, necessarily attaches itself to the succeeding ones. More surprising is the omission of the article here; though, if these clauses are taken, as is commonly supposed, from some Christian hymn, it will not appear so strange. In 2 Cor. 5:19. Gal. 2:6. 6:7. 1 Thess. 2:5, Θεός as the subject of a proposition, likewise occurs, without the article. The reading ὅς, as the more difficult one, is preferred by some, in accordance with the canon of Griesbach: *Difficilior et obscurior lectio anteponenda est ei in qua omnia tam plana sunt et extricata ut librarius quisque facile intelligere ea potuerit.*¹ But to regard this hermeneutical rule as absolute, would be perfectly absurd. Just as though a copyist could not, through indistinctness in hearing, or carelessness in observing, blunder into a more difficult reading! What should we think, were our proof-readers to adopt the above rule for their own convenience? But even if ὅς were considered the genuine reading, the idea, it appears to us, would remain substantially the same. The reference, manifestly, must be to Christ, in his Logos, or divine nature.²

Heb. 1:8. "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." This verse is quoted from Ps. xlv.; and though some dispute its Messianic character, yet our author evidently regarded it as having reference to Christ: how else could he say, while reasoning with the Jews, πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν?

But whatever may have been its original reference, the appellation ὁ Θεός is here expressly given to Christ. So, in vs. 10—12, the words primarily addressed to Jehovah, are

¹ The acknowledged difficulties of the proposed reading are these: 1. that there is no substantive in the context to which ὅς can relate as its antecedent; and 2. that ὅς of *itself* does not include both the demonstrative and relative, or in other words, does not mean: he who.

² Prof. Stuart, in speaking of this text, says: "Whoever attentively studies John 17:20—26; 1 John 1:3; 2:5; 4:15, 16, and other passages of like tenor, will see that 'God might be manifest' in the person of Christ without the necessary implication of the proper divinity of the Saviour." This may perhaps be true, but the passages adduced are not parallel to the one before us, and the assertion: "God was manifest in the person of Christ," by no means exhausts the meaning of the scripture affirmation that "God was manifested in the flesh."

applied directly to Christ ; and he is represented as the infinite Creator and the unchangeable One. That the Son, who has just been called *ὁ Θεός*, should himself have a *Θεός* (ver. 9), is entirely accordant with the two-fold view of Christ which is elsewhere presented.

1 John 5:20. "And we are in him who is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." The reasons for referring these epithets to Christ, are the following : 1. *οὗτος* (this) more naturally refers to Christ as its immediate antecedent. It sometimes, indeed, relates to a more remote noun, when this is conceived of as the principal subject. There is no reason, however, why the Son of God may not be regarded as the principal subject here. 2. John seems, in a manner, to identify *τὸν ἀληθινόν* with Christ, in the clause : We are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ. 3. Life and eternal life are repeatedly used, in John's writings, almost as synonyms for Christ. On the other hand, it is alleged that the title "True God" is, elsewhere, exclusively attributed to God the Father. But is not Christ, in John's writings, the Truth as well as the Life? And could not he say of the Logos, the Life of men, and, as incarnate, full of grace and *truth*, This is the true God and eternal life? 4. The reference of this epithet, *the true*, for the third time in this verse, to God the *Father*, would be, as De Wette acknowledges, extremely tautological. If, therefore, this clause must be referred to God the Father, then, with Andrews Norton, we must concede that the apostle John was a very unskilful writer.

Titus 2:13. "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory (or, the glorious appearing) of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ." Such is the rendering which is allowed, or, as many eminent linguists think, demanded by the idiomatic usage of the Greek article.¹ Another and still stronger reason for referring *μεγάλου Θεοῦ* (great God) to Christ, is this, that *ἐπιφάνεια* (appearing, manifestation) is

¹ The idiom referred to is this : when two nouns are connected by *καί*, the first having the article and the second destitute of it, the latter noun, especially if it be an *attributive*, is simply explanatory of the former.

elsewhere never predicated of the invisible God the Father ; for it is to be observed that both subjects, in our text, stand similarly related to this ἐπιφάνειαν. And, indeed, it is generally conceded that Christ alone is to appear, but that he will come in the glory of his Father, as also in his own. Even according to this view, the great God and our Saviour are so far identified that the glory of the one is the glory of the other (comp. 2 Cor. 4 : 6). To our interpretation it is objected that Paul's Christological views would not allow him to designate Christ as the great God. Usteri, on the other hand, avers that " God the Father did not need the exalting and laudatory epithet μέγας : this rather refers to Christ." How easy for the apostle to have prevented all ambiguity by simply prefixing the article to σωτήρος ἡμῶν, as is usually the case.

Several other texts, likewise, partake of this ambiguity — Eph. 5 : 5, " the kingdom of Christ, even God " (the first noun having the article, while the second is without it). So in ver. 20, " God and Father," i. e. God, who is the Father. 2 Thess. 1 : 12, " according to the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. 1 : 1, " righteousness of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ (so in the margin of our English version). De Wette inserts *our* before Saviour ; but, compare the same construction in ver. 11, and 3 : 18 — " our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Jude 4, " denying the only Sovereign, even our Lord Jesus Christ (comp. 2 Pet. 2 : 1 ; elsewhere δεσπότην, *sovereign*, refers to God). And this leads us to notice another source of ambiguity. Many attributives which should, properly, distinguish God from all other beings, are likewise applied, unqualifiedly, to Christ ; and the interpreter, in consequence, is sometimes at a loss to know whether they are to be referred to the one or to the other. For example : God is called our Sovereign and Lord ; and Christ, also, is our Sovereign and Lord. God is our Saviour ; and Christ is our Saviour. God is our judge ; and Christ our judge. God is the first and the last ; and Christ is the first and the last. God is all in all ; and Christ is all in all. Can there be, for us, Lords many, and Judges many, and Sa-

viours many? Other forms of ambiguity occur, especially where the terms Christ and God or Jehovah seem to be used interchangeably or synonymously. In Rev. 22 : 6, the Lord God, who sent his angel, appears, from ver. 16, to have been the Lord Jesus : " I, Jesus, have sent mine angel," etc. From Heb. 3 : 3, 4, the inference seems to be unavoidable that Christ is called God, who hath built all things. Why else, it is asked, have we the undisputed and irrelevant truisms of ver. 4? For instances in which Jehovah and Christ are used as convertible terms, comp. Eph. 4 : 8 with Ps. 68 : 18. Rom. 14 : 10, 11 with Isa. 45 : 23. Mark 1 : 2, 3 with Mal. 3 : 1. Isa. 40 : 3. Heb. 1 : 10 with Ps. 102 : 25. John 12 : 41 with Isa. 6 : 1—3. 1 Cor. 10 : 4, 9 with Ex. 17 : 2, 7, etc.

In view, now, of all these acknowledged ambiguities, we are forced to remark that, if the sacred writers did not hold and intend to teach the substantial equality of the Son with the Father, then they have been, as it appears to us, far too careless and negligent in their use of language. Is not God immeasurably exalted above all his creatures, and separated from them, in nature and in state, by an infinite chasm, an impassable gulf? And in reference to what other being, than Christ, is there, in the Bible, the smallest room for doubt whether such an one be a finite, dependent creature, or the uncreated, and eternal One? If Christ were merely a created being, would the scriptures have furnished the least ground for doubt in regard to *Him*?

We turn, now, to a class of passages in which equality with God is attributed to Christ.

Phil. 2 : 6, "who, being in the form of God, thought not the being equal with God a robbery; but he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, becoming in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." As this deeply interesting passage has been variously interpreted, we have aimed to give it a closely literal rendering. The "being in the form of God," must refer to the outward appearing and manifestation of the preëxistent Christ. In John 17 : 5, Christ speaks of the glory which he had with

the Father before the world was. This glory, which he had in common with the Father, was his *manifested* divine glory. Thus he was in the form of God, i. e. he had the manifested glory of God, or was manifested as God. In like manner, when he assumed the form of a servant, he appeared, or was manifested, as a servant. Some compare this "form" of God to the "image" of God, the "express image" of his substance, and the "effulgence" or "reflection" of his glory (Col. 1 : 15. 2 Cor. 4 : 4. Heb. 1 : 3); but we think these epithets are used, rather, of the mediatorial Logos or the historical Christ. But if Christ was truly in the form of God, must there not have been, in him, some substantial ground and basis for that manifestation? This fact the apostle recognizes, and hence affirms that Christ was equal with God, and that he regarded this divine equality as his natural, inherent right, and proper possession. "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God." If Christ, however, be merely a created being, then is he, as all will concede, infinitely inferior to God. Does the apostle, then, declare that an infinitely inferior being is equal to the supreme and eternal God? And can such a being, "meek and *lowly* in heart," claim to be equal with Jehovah? But some have asked, how was it any proof of Christ's humility and self-forgetfulness that he did not regard the being equal with God as a robbery? We answer: the *higher* the position he occupied, the greater his stoop of condescension; and the fact that he was *conscious* of his independent, exalted position, greatly enhances, at least to our human views and feelings, his wonderful condescension. In this was manifested both the humility and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, *though he was rich*, yet for our sakes became poor (2 Cor. 8 : 9). It is, first, in verse seven that Paul expressly speaks of that humility and self-sacrificing love of Christ which he would have his Philippian brethren imitate (see vs. 4, 5). There is, therefore, no necessity of departing from the proper meaning of ἀρπαγμός (robbery), and rendering the clause, as many do: He did not consider the being equal with God as a thing which he must seize for himself, or as an object of solicitous desire; thus

making ἀρπαγμός = *praeda*, or rather *res arripienda*. Even according to this rendering, the manifested equality with God is something which Christ could have obtained (or retained), had this been compatible with his design of saving men. But the apostle affirms that "he emptied himself," namely, by taking the form of a servant, and becoming in the likeness of men. In assuming the servant-form, he divested himself of the form of God, and thus, for our sakes, became poor. In himself, he was still equal with God, although this equality was not fully manifested. In view, now, of what Christ divested himself, when he partook of flesh and blood, we may easily understand how he, though the equal of the Father, could yet say, in the days of his humiliation and sufferings, "the days of his flesh:" my Father is greater than I. And being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself [by] becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.¹ One would think it quite needless to inquire when Jesus was found in fashion as a man; but, according to De Wette, it was not until he had submitted to baptism, and entered upon his public career! Previous to this, i. e. in his youth and early manhood, he was in the form of God; or, in other words, the divine glory dwelt in him *potentially*, and he had not assumed the form of a servant, nor become in the likeness of men! But did not Christ have the divine glory potentially, in himself, during his strictly historic career? Nay, was not that glory much more fully manifested by his wonderful miracles than in his pre-historic life? We will not, however, enter upon a serious refutation of this view; but simply state, in justice to De Wette, that even he would not deny the *possibility* that Paul may have regarded the Logos as the true subject of the personality of Christ.²

¹ Nomen ipsum crucis absit non modo a corpore civium Romanorum sed etiam a cogitatione, oculis, auribus. — Cicero pro Rab. C. V. Crudelissimum teterri-
mumque supplicium. Servitutis extremum summumque supplicium . . . Faci-
nus est vinciri civem Romanum, scelus verberari, prope parricidium necari, quid
dicam in crucem tolli? — Cic. in Verr. VI. 64, 66.

² From a certain book-notice in one of our denominational Reviews we learn, that "it is quite too bad that the Deity of Christ should be demonstrated by means of a text *so well known* to be wholly turned from its real meaning as this

John 5:23. "That all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." Our Saviour here claims equal homage with the Father on the ground of his oneness with him. In justification of his alleged profanation of the Sabbath, he says (ver. 17) : my Father worketh hitherto, and I work. The Jews take offence at this declaration, and accuse him of making himself equal with God (comp. 10:33. 19:7). He proceeds, however, to confirm his previous statement. Such is his inseparable and essential oneness with the Father, that he can do nothing of himself ; but, what things the Father doeth, the same doeth the Son likewise. The Son hath power to raise the dead, to quicken whom he will, and even to pronounce the eternal awards of men ; for the Father hath given him all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18), and hath committed all judgment into his hands, because he is *the Son of man*, or the *incarnate Word*. If Christ were merely a created being, is it probable that all power and all judgment — omnipotence and omniscience itself, would or could have been committed unto him ? and with this intent, that all men should honor him even as they honor the infinite God ? Does not our Saviour, then, instead of disproving and repelling the accusation of the Jews, rather confirm and establish the truth of their charge ?

Wetstein and others, however, have compared this relation of the Son to the Father, to that of a prime minister to his monarch ; so that the Son, as an ambassador from Heaven, may justly demand the homage which is due to the Father. But does an earthly ambassador wield all the power of his king, and do all the works which the king doeth ? Does he aver : All things which the king hath are mine ? Does he,

It certainly ought to be understood that the literal words of our English version of the Bible were not used by Jesus or the apostles, and that King James's translators could lay no valid claims to plenary inspiration." As some of us, however, are still quite ignorant of that which elsewhere appears to be "so well known," we think it "quite too bad" that the critic has not attempted to enlighten us by an exegesis of the passage. Would he venture to adopt as his "improved version" : he thought not of the robbery of being equal with God ? Meyer, perhaps the ablest New Testament commentator living, defends the view which is presented in our English version. We think "it is quite too bad" that *he* should be so far behind the age in sacred philology and biblical criticism.

in fact, claim equal honor with his king? Does he ever affirm: He that hath seen me, hath seen the king? Does he venture to assume the title *his majesty*, or allow others to bestow it on him? Such an ambitious minister would doubtless be very suddenly removed, not only from his office, but most probably from the land of the living? But whatever may be the fact concerning earthly ambassadors, we trust that Jehovah can have no prime minister, among created beings, who will venture to assume an equality of power and glory with the King eternal, immortal, and invisible.

John 10:30. "I and my Father are one." This is a kindred passage with the one just examined. The unity of the Son and the Father, here spoken of, is not only that of will but of power; for the Saviour refers to it in confirmation of the asserted security of his sheep while in his hands. But must there not be some substantial basis for a unity like this? Such, again, was the understanding of the Jews; for they accuse him of blasphemy, of arrogating to himself divine equality, and of making himself God. Instead of indignantly repelling the charge, he proceeds to justify his assertion, and finally rests his claims upon their faith, on the simple fact that he doeth the works which the Father doeth. This explanation was not, of course, very satisfactory to the Jews, and "they again sought to take him."

In John 16:15, Christ declares: "All things whatsoever (*πάντα ὅσα*) the Father hath are mine"; and, in the immediate context, he says: "the Spirit of truth, the Paraclete, whom I will send, shall glorify me, for he shall take of mine and shall shew it unto you." Do such assertions as these well befit the lips of any finite, inferior being? Paul, instructed by this Spirit of truth, asserts (according to the Textus Receptus) that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;¹ and that in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead (or the Divine essence) bodily; and thus,

¹ The scriptures repeatedly attribute the knowledge of all things to Christ, and yet he himself says: Of that day and hour knoweth no one, neither the angels in heaven *nor the Son*, but the Father, Mark 13:32; comp. Matt. 24:36. Some have predicated this ignorance of the *man* Jesus, of whom it is said that

having all fulness in himself, he filleth all in all (Col. 2 : 3, 9. Eph. 1 : 23. 4 : 10). He likewise speaks of Christ as all-powerful, as being able to subdue all things unto himself, and as upholding all things by his powerful word (Phil. 3 : 21. Heb. 1 : 3). In Rev. 22 : 1, 3, Christ is represented as possessing one and the same throne with the Father — the throne of God and of the Lamb; and often, elsewhere, as sitting at the right hand of God, or of power. Thus does the exalted Messiah share alike, with the Father, in divine glory and universal dominion.

In this connection, also, we may notice the baptismal formula, since the Son seems, here, to be placed on an equality with the Father. It will be observed that the command is not, to be baptized unto the name of God and of Christ; but unto the related names of the Father, and the Son, while the term God does not occur. These reciprocal and inseparable names do, of themselves, indicate an essential union and equality. It will be acknowledged, moreover, that the Father and the Spirit are each, in some way, intimately and peculiarly connected with Deity, and thus the abstract probability would be that the middle term (the Son) is similarly related. We are baptized unto each name alike, and therefore would seem to sustain to each a similar relation. Hence the formula, in itself, apparently favors the divine equality of the Father, Son, and Spirit. It is, indeed, said that, elsewhere, we have the phrase "baptized unto Moses, and unto Paul," etc.;

he grew in *wisdom* and stature. Olshausen refers it to the *κένωσις* of the Lord in his position of humiliation, Phil. 2 : 6. Others have thought that Jesus here speaks as a *prophet*, and thus as not empowered to *declare* the precise day and hour; comp. Acts 1 : 7. The event here spoken of refers, most probably, to the destruction of Jerusalem, and therewith of the Jewish dispensation. As now our Lord revealed the general fact that it should happen within the lifetime of his generation, and moreover stated what should first occur, we cannot suppose that he was *absolutely* ignorant of the time when he himself, "the Son of man," should come. To suppose otherwise would be, according to Athanasius, just as if any one should accurately describe to a traveller, who wished to visit a certain city, what should happen to him on the way, what lay before the city, etc., and yet should not know where the city itself was! How, he asks, could he who made the ages (Heb. 1 : 2) be ignorant of the end of the ages? See Möhler's "Athanasius der Grosse," S. 263.

with the name, singular, denoting unity, "

and yet these are not divine beings. True: but the name of Moses was not associated with that of Jehovah, in a permanent formula of faith. And as for Paul, what would he think of a baptismal formula, running thus: "Unto the name of the Father, and of the apostle to the Gentiles, and of the Holy Ghost?" Can we think the name of *any* subordinate, finite creature congruous or becoming, in such a position? To be baptized unto the Father—what is it, but to make, by open profession, an entire surrender of ourselves unto him, evermore to yield him obedience, love, trust, homage, worship? So, also, are we baptized unto the Son, and unto the Spirit, making the same surrender, yielding the same allegiance and service. Each of these "names" is alike the author and procuring cause of our salvation; and we are baptized unto one no more than unto another. Thus these names are indissolubly and forever united: the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—the of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things; thus forming one complete and homogeneous whole, forever separated from earth and men and angels, the triune God, our Father and Saviour and Sanctifier (comp. 2 Cor. 13:14. 1 Cor. 12:4—6. Eph. 4:4—6). We are Trinitarians, therefore; for unto the name of the Trinity were we baptized—the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. The truth contained in this standing formula for all ages, constitutes not only the foundation, but the body and substance of the Christian religion. To introduce into such a formula, with the name of the infinite God, the name of a divine influence, and, between these, the name of a dependent, accountable creature, and then to be *baptized* unto these—would be, as it appears to us, no less repugnant to right reason than adverse to the teachings of Scripture.¹

¹ The passage concerning the three heavenly witnesses (1 John 5:7), though occurring in the Vulgate and three or four modern Greek manuscripts, and supposed to be quoted or referred to by Tertullian and Cyprian, is yet not found in any Greek manuscript written before the fifteenth century, which circumstance we deem a sufficient reason for *doubting* its genuineness, or at least for not regarding it *at present* as an authoritative proof text. See Davidson's *Bib. Criticism*, Vol. II. p. 403 seq.

We have already adverted to certain texts in which the creation and preservation of the world is ascribed to Christ; but it may be well to group them together here. John (1:3) affirms that all things were made by the Logos, and that no created thing was made without him; and, in ver. 10, he says that the world was made by him. Had the apostle affirmed that all things were made by Jehovah or God (as in Heb. 2:10), none would contend that *διά* denoted merely the instrumental cause.¹ Only in Heb. 1:2 (in Eph. 3:9, the words "by Jesus Christ," are not genuine) do we read that God created the worlds, or ages, by his Son. Even here the writer would not deny that Christ was the efficient cause of creation; for, in v. 10, he says: "And thou, Lord, in the beginning, didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands," etc. These words, quoted from Ps. cii., where the reference must be to Jehovah, are here directly applied to Christ; and, consequently, efficient causation must be ascribed to him (see, also, ver. 3). Besides, what room can there be in a Christian monotheistic system of doctrines for an instrumental, secondary, created Creator?

Paul, in Col. 1:16, 17, asserts that in Christ (as the cause or ground) were all things created, both celestial and terrestrial, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and *for him*. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist (comp. 1 Cor. 8:6). But Jehovah says: "I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself" (Isa. 44:24). Unless, therefore, we hold, with the Gnostics, that the demiurgus is a subordinate, inferior being, must we not maintain that the eternal power and Godhead of the Son are clearly discerned by the things which he

¹ Even if Christ were regarded merely as the *instrumental* creator, this fact alone would not prove his inferiority. "For the person," says Knapp, "through whom I accomplish anything, so far from being necessarily inferior to myself, may be equal or even greater. I may, for example, secure a favor to any one from the king, through the influence of the *minister*." Christian Theology, p. 168.

has made? Who can suppose a created being to be the author, sustainer, and end of all this vast creation?

Not more clearly, to our mind, does the work of creation prove the divinity of Christ, than does the power and act of forgiveness of sins. It is manifest that Christ, by his own authority, and in his own name, granted pardon to the sinner; and hence the accusation of the Jews: 'This man blasphemeth—who can forgive sins, but God alone (Mark 2: 7)?' The declaration of Jehovah is: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake" (Isa. 43: 25); and yet the penitent sinner is forgiven, not only by the Saviour, but for his sake. No truth, we imagine, is plainer in the New Testament, than that we are redeemed, pardoned, and saved, by Christ and for the sake of Christ. But what created being sustains that relation to God, or has that merit, or can make that atonement, or work out that righteousness, which shall furnish the ground or reason why God should forgive and save the guilty? Can it be that we are absolutely indebted to any created being for the gospel and its free salvation?

Christ is, emphatically, both the Lord and the Saviour of the New Testament.¹ To be a Saviour of sinners, however, he must have power on earth to forgive sins, to renew the mind, and sanctify the heart. But how great a work to save *one* lost soul from sin and death! The created universe, combined, were insufficient for the mighty task. It needs an all-sufficient, an almighty Saviour. No person, when weighed down with the dreadful burden of guilt, feels that any created arm can save him. And well might such an one despair of all hope, if the Saviour, to whom he is directed to look for forgiveness, and in whom he must trust for salvation, is, like himself, a weak, dependent, accountable creature, whom God, if he chooses, can annihilate forever.

¹ Prof. Stuart states as the result of his investigation of the usage of *κύριος* (Lord), "that in nearly all (about 240) of the 246 instances in which *κύριος* is used by Paul to designate Christ or God, independently of quotations from the Old Testament, it is applied to the designation of Christ." See Bib. Repository, 1831, p. 770. The Epistle to the Hebrews is here included among Paul's writings.

Listen to the bold words of Luther on this point. "If Christ does not abide the true and essential God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and Creator of all created things, we are lost. For, what would the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ avail us, if he were a mere man, like thee and me? He could not have vanquished Satan, sin, and death. We need a Saviour who is truly God, and raised above sin, death, the devil, and hell. It matters little that the Arians exclaim: 'Christ is the noblest, the most exalted, of creatures.' They think, in this way to recommend their shameful error, so that the people may not detect it. But if they strike at the faith, though in the least thing, it is all over with us. If they rob Christ of his divinity, we are past all deliverance from the judgment and wrath of God." Assuredly, nothing is more certain than that a sinner, when convinced of his sins and lost condition, feels the need of an almighty Saviour. Hence it is that many persons who had previously denied the Lord that bought them, have when convinced of their sins by the Holy Ghost, learned for the first time to call Jesus Lord. And thus it is that, in an emphatic sense, no man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. We believe, therefore, that the divinity of Christ is a doctrine into which every man is converted, when converted by the Spirit of God. The theology of every newly-regenerate soul is briefly this: "I am a great sinner; but I have a great, an almighty Saviour." When thus the Spirit, at the time of his conversion, has taken of the things of Jesus and shown them unto him, how firm is his belief in the Saviour's eternal power and Godhead, and how enlarged and rapturous are his views of the fulness there is in Christ! No speculative difficulties can disturb his faith; for he knows in whom he has believed. Hence, also, no unconverted person — no man who is destitute of an experimental knowledge of the Saviour's divine power and grace, can preach, as Paul did, the unsearchable riches of Christ, or as Bunyan *does*, in his "Come and welcome to Jesus Christ," and his "Jerusalem Sinner saved."

The New Testament, further, represents Christ as an object of divine worship and of prayer. He whom all the an-

gels in heaven are commanded to worship, and to whom, or at whose name (τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων ὀνομάτων), every knee in the universe shall bow (Phil. 2 : 10. comp. Rom. 14 : 11), must be the object, not only of external homage, but of spiritual worship.

So the apostles and early disciples worshipped Christ, not only while on earth, but after his ascension (Matt. 14 : 33, 28. 9 : 17. Luke 24 : 52). The sacred writers, in their doxologies, repeatedly ascribe to Christ glory and dominion everlasting¹ (Rev. 1 : 6. 2 Tim. 4 : 18. Heb. 13 : 21. 1 Pet. 4 : 11. 2 Pet. 3 : 18). And the song of the redeemed in heaven is : " Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever

¹ The prophecies relating to Christ declare that his throne endureth forever and ever, that his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one which shall not be destroyed, that he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And from the passages above quoted, we learn that the redeemed on earth and in heaven ascribe to Christ honor, power, dominion, and glory forever and ever. Only in 1 Cor. 15 : 24, 28, do we read that the Son shall finally deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, and himself become subject unto Him. This passage, standing alone in the scriptures, is by far the most difficult one to harmonize with the fact of Christ's supreme divinity. Indeed, if the Son were here regarded as wholly identical with the Logos, we should feel obliged to yield the point in question. But the idea that the Logos, as such, is finally to become subject to the Father, cannot be entertained for a moment. The reference in these verses is manifestly to Christ as the Messiah or Mediator. When this mediatorial king shall have put all enemies under his feet (vs. 25), then the work of mediation will necessarily cease, and thus the kingdom of Christ will *ipso facto* become the kingdom of God, i. e. the Eternal Divinity will henceforth rule without a mediator. Whatever else the " subjection " spoken of may refer to, we cannot suppose that Christ will ever cease to possess that divine glory which he had with the Father before the world was, or that the saints in heaven will ever cease to ascribe glory, honor, and power to the Lamb that was slain. Indeed, the heaven of Paul and of the primitive disciples consists in their " being ever with the Lord," 2 Cor. 5 : 8 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 17 ; Phil. 1 : 23. Marcellus of Ancyra supposed, after the manner of Sabellius, that the Logos would finally return to his original state, i. e. would cast aside the human envelop and become merged in God as he was " in the beginning." But what would become of the divine σάρξ (the flesh) he could not tell. We shall come, he says, to the knowledge of this only when we see face to face ! See Neander, Ch. Hist., Vol. II. p. 757.

and ever.”¹ Thus do the redeemed and angelic spirits worship Christ as equal with God, and thus do they honor the Son even as they honor the Father. But has the great Jehovah revoked his own word and given his glory to another? Or have these saints forgotten the divine command: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve?

The apostles and early Christians, also, directed their supplications to Christ. Some, even now, with Origen in olden time, hesitate to address the Saviour in prayer; but, once his disciples were known as “callers upon Christ;” and this too, before the name “Christians” was given them. “To call on the name of Jehovah,” is a frequent formula in the Old Testament, denoting the worship of God. In 1 Cor. 1:2, Paul addresses all those who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in every place (comp. 2 Tim. 2:22). Ananias, in addressing Jesus, says: “and here he [Saul] hath authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon thy name (Acts 9:14 [17]). After Ananias was convinced of the genuineness of Saul’s conversion, he says to him: “arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord (Acts 22:16). And when Saul first began to preach Christ as the Son of God, his astonished hearers said: “is not this he who, in Jerusalem, destroyed them that call on this name?” (Acts 9:21. comp. 22:19.) The same Lord who appeared to Saul, on his way to Damascus, and of whom he inquired, “What wilt thou have me to do,” subsequently several times appeared in his behalf, and stood by him, to minister counsel and strength (Acts 22:17, 18. 23:11. 18:9. 2 Tim. 4:17). The Lord, whom the apostle “besought thrice” (2 Cor. 12:8), was Christ, as verse 9 plainly shows (the words translated “strength” and “power,” being, in the original, the same — *δύναμις*). And both Paul and Peter declare, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord (i. e. Jesus: so De Wette, Meyer, and others), shall be saved (Acts 2:21. Rom. 10:12, 13. comp. vs. 9, 14 and

¹ Thus no *trinitarian* formula, says De Wette. Much less, however, is it “unitarian,” for the former will embrace it, but the latter, alas, cannot.

Joel 2:32). In the choice of an apostle, the disciples prayed and said: "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men" (Acts 1:24. cf. vs. 21, 2. John 21:17. 2:24, 25. Rev. 2:23. 1 Cor. 4:5). The proto-martyr Stephen, making invocation with his dying breath (Acts 7:59), said: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit; and, kneeling down he cried, with a loud voice: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." But how is it, that this eminent Christian martyr, when filled with the Holy Ghost, and his eyes fastened on the very vision of God, should commend his departing spirit to Christ, and implore of him forgiveness for his murderers? The apostles, furthermore, make all their protestations, and perform all their miracles, in the name of Christ. More than a score of times do they entreat, for their brethren, "grace, mercy, and peace, from the Lord Jesus Christ," even as from God the Father. In several passages, Christ is directly addressed in conjunction with the Father (2 Thess. 2:16, 17. 1 Thess. 3:11, 12. comp. 2 Tim. 4:22). And thus the New Testament itself closes with prayer to Christ, and with supplication for his grace (Rev. 22:20, 21). In heaven, also, the representatives of redeemed and glorified humanity, *fall down before the Lamb*, having every one of them harps and golden bowls full of incense; which, as the apostle tells us, are the *prayers* of the saints (Rev. 5:8).

Nor does our Saviour, anywhere, forbid his disciples to pray to him; but, on the contrary, rather encourages them so to do. When (in John 16:23) he says: "in that day ye shall ask me nothing," the meaning is, that they, hereafter, should be so fully instructed by the Spirit, that they would not need, through ignorance of anything, to make further inquiries of him (comp. vs. 19, 30). The two verbs rendered *ask*, in our verse, are different in the original. But in John 14:13, 14, Christ tells his disciples: "whatsoever ye shall ask, in my name, that will *I* do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, *I* will do it." Here, Christ is the answerer of prayers offered in his name, or on his account. Allied to this is the promise in Matt. 18:20, "where two or three are met together in

my name, there am I, in the midst of them." See, also, 28 : 20. Can we wonder, then, that the apostles, after the great outpouring of the Spirit, felt Christ to be specially near them, and constantly looked up to him for his guidance and support?

It is thus a remarkable fact, that our Saviour never refused any homage or honors, excepting when they were offered to him, as Neander observes, from erroneous views.¹ It was not Jesus, but the angel whom Jesus sent, who forbade John to worship him (Rev. 19 : 10. 22 : 8, 9, 16). We have already seen that Christ claimed for himself divine perfections and honors, and that he allowed others, without rebuke, to put him in the place of God, and to address him as their Lord and their God. How is it, now, that the Saviour does not, at once, disabuse their minds of error, or repel the false charge of blasphemy? Why, with the holy horror of an apostle, does he not rend his garments, and cry out : Sirs, why do ye these things? I am a man, like yourselves; turn ye away from me and worship the living God (Acts 10 : 26. 14 : 14). Unless Christ be truly divine, we do not see how the well-known testimony of the sceptic Lessing can be easily refuted : "If Christ," says he, "is not the true God, the Mohammedan religion is indisputably far better than the Christian; and Mohammed himself was, incomparably, a greater and more honorable man than Jesus Christ; for he was more truth-telling, more circumspect in what he said,

¹ See Neander's *Life of Christ*, p. 97. In a foot note he refers to Luke 11 : 27 and 18 : 19. The latter text reads thus : "Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is God." The young ruler regarding Jesus as a mere man, a merely human teacher, yet bestowed upon him the epithet *good*. The Saviour, wishing to rebuke the ruler's self-righteousness ("What lack I yet?"), tells him that absolute goodness belongs alone to God. Man's best works are all stained and imperfect. He thus raises the young man's thoughts above the earth, and turns them away from all human goodness to heaven and to God, the only good and the source of all goodness. "Jesus," says Ullmann, "does not deny that he is good, but only refuses to be called so in the style of pompous ceremony. . . . He declines the title 'Good Master,' as it was misused by pharisaical pride. . . . He speaks as a man on the level with his inquirer," etc. See *German Selections*, p. 414. Our Saviour, also, disallowed the repeated testimony of the demoniacs to his divine sonship.

and more zealous for the honor of the one and only God, than Christ was ; who, if he did not exactly give himself out for God, yet at least said a hundred two-meaning things, to lead simple people to think so ; while Mohammed could never be charged with a single instance of double-dealing in this way." We would speak with becoming reverence and cautiousness on this point ; but we are forced to acknowledge our inability to discover any preëminent humility or modesty in the Saviour, if he were merely a dependent, accountable creature, like ourselves. Nor do we know of anything which can free the early Christians, the apostles, the martyrs, and the angels and saints of heaven, from the charge and guilt of idolatry, save the fact of the divinity of Christ.

We find, therefore, additional evidence of the deity of Christ, in the character of the views and feelings which the apostles and primitive disciples cherished concerning him. Christ said to his disciples, what no mere creature could well say : " without me, ye can do nothing." And this absolute dependence on Christ is recognized and confessed, in every page, and almost every verse, of the Acts and the Epistles. Though the Bible pronounces him cursed that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm ; yet the apostles show, in their writings, that they placed their whole reliance upon Christ, and looked to him for all temporal and spiritual blessings. They speak of their dependence upon Christ ; of doing all things through Christ strengthening them ; of cleaving to Christ ; of having fellowship with Christ ; of belonging to Christ ; of trusting in Christ ; of being found in Christ ; and of counting all things as loss for Christ. They speak of Christ as their life, their joy, their glory, their peace, their righteousness, and their hope ; of his being formed within them ; living in them ; dwelling in them ; of their obeying him, and loving him, and serving him, and living for him ; and of their desiring to depart and be forever with him, who is the temple, and light, and glory of the heavenly world. It would be difficult, even for a disciple of Zinzendorf, to express greater love and attachment to Christ, or to extol and

laud him more highly than the inspired writers have done in the New Testament. They make Christ the burden of their preaching, the central object of the Bible and of religion, to whom the ancient sacrifices and prophecies had reference, and around whom are clustered all the promises of the gospel and all the hopes of the believer. But can it be, that all the scriptures, all our preaching, all our religion, all our hopes of forgiveness and heaven, all our trust and our joys, and the deepest affections of our hearts converge in, and centre around, any created, finite being? ¹ Can it be, that the fact and design of creation, that the providences of God in history, that the plan of redemption, the solemn ordinances of the gospel, the resurrection of the dead, the joys of heaven, and all the interests of a deathless soul for time and eternity, are thus connected with the person of a dependent, accountable, and perishable creature?

It is, therefore, our firm belief that, if the doctrine of Christ's divinity be taken out of the scriptures, we have no gospel left; for thus do we rob it of its peculiar character and power, its living substance, and its essential glory. When this doctrine falls, it must carry with it the whole series of the doctrines of grace; for they all are linked together, in one great circle of living truth. Were it entirely a disconnected dogma, and merely a matter of speculative interest, we would not contend for it a single moment. But we hold it to be a fundamental and vitally-important doctrine, precious to the Christian's heart, and a never-failing support in the dying hour. Believing also, with Pascal, that in Christ (as God-man) all contradictions are reconciled, we have been accustomed to regard the incarnation and redemption of Christ as God's own theodicy, and indeed the only satisfactory and unanswerable vindication of the ways of God to men. This doctrine has ever been peculiarly dear to the saints of God, since it has been the source of all their dearest hopes and joys. Hear, on this point, the testimony of the

¹ "We need," says Athanasius, "a Redeemer who is our Lord by nature, in order that we may not by redemption again become the slaves of an idol." Christ as *Emmanuel* is such a Redeemer as lost sinners need.

elder Edwards, "that moral Newton and that second Paul:" "Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that, for me, was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as mediator between God and man. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent — with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception; which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me, a greater part of the time, in a flood of tears and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be (what I know not otherwise how to express) emptied and annihilated: to be in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone." He also says: "I have many times had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of Sanctifier: in his holy operations, communicating divine life and light to the soul." And again: "God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting views of God, that he subsists in three persons — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Certainly no Christian, when deeply impressed with a sense of the divine mercy, could forbear to ascribe glory to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom he feels indebted for the great salvation. And heaven itself would be spoiled of its joys, if there he could not unite in saying: Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever (Rev. 5:12, 13. 7:10. 1:5, 6). So long, therefore, as we believe in the Bible, and hope for the heaven of the Bible, so long must we maintain the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. If it cannot be defended on Athanasian ground, then it can be on some other. We are not so particular as to the way and manner in which it is explained, since the *modus* has not been revealed. But the fact itself is most plainly revealed. Even the doctrine of the divine unity is not more clearly set forth in the scriptures. And yet we are told that the doctrines of the Trinity and of the divinity of the Logos had their origin in the Platonic philosophy, and have come down to us, not

in the Bible, but in the misty speculations of the Fathers and schoolmen, and in the creeds and liturgies of the churches.¹ To this remarkably profound view (we will not say, of the scriptures, but) of human nature and Christian history, we subjoin the following opposing statement of Neander. "If this idea of the Logos was not placed in connection with Christianity by the authority of an apostolic type of doctrine, but must be considered as merely the product of a fusion of Platonism or of the Alexandrian-Jewish theology with the Christian doctrine; its wide diffusion of which, church fathers of the most opposite tendencies bear witness, could hardly be accounted for. If it could so commend itself to the teachers with whom the Platonic element of culture predominated, still the others, by whom everything derived from that quarter was suspected, must, for this very reason, have been prejudiced against it. As the defenders of the doctrine of Christ's divinity, in the beginning of the second century, could appeal, in evidence of the fact that this was the ancient doctrine of the church, to the oldest church teachers, and to the ancient Christian hymns; so this evidence is, in fact, confirmed by the report of Pliny,"² etc. It is certainly true that some of the early Fathers made use of the Platonic philosophy to explain the scripture doctrine of the Logos; and it is to this source, probably, that the Nicene creed is indebted for its emanation theory. But neither the Platonic

¹ We are happy in this connection to record the fact that history makes mention of *one* individual, at least, who did not derive his faith in the deity of Christ from the creeds! We refer to Hilary of Poitiers in Gaul, the able defender of Trinitarianism (died A. D. 368). Of him Neander thus speaks: "Now for the first time he heard of the Nicene creed, and found in it the doctrine of the unity of essence in the Father and Son, which he had before this ascertained to be the true doctrine from the study of the New Testament, and had received into his Christian experience, without being aware that the faith which he bore in his heart had been laid down in the form of a creed." — Ch. Hist. II. p. 396.

² See his Church History, Vol. I. p. 575. In the above extract, Neander refers to a fragment preserved by Eusebius, which reads thus: "All the psalms and hymns of the brethren, written from the beginning by the faithful, celebrate the praises of Christ, the Word of God, and attribute divinity to him." The well-known testimony of Pliny (A. D. 110) is: "that they [the Christians] were accustomed on a stated day to meet before light and to sing with one another a hymn to Christ as God." Comp. with this, Eph. 5: 19 (Col. 3: 16).

nor any other transient "philosophy," was ever of much advantage to the pure doctrines of the Bible. Platonism vitiated the Christology of Justin Martyr, and led Origen quite to the verge of semi-Arianism. For Arianism, and not Trinitarianism, was the legitimate offspring and outgrowth of Platonism. That theory which sees, in the Logos, a secondary god, a subordinate and dependent being, and yet the creator of the worlds, is wholly allied to the teachings of the Neo-Platonic and Gnostic philosophies.

It is also quite improbable that all who have believed in the divinity of Christ, have received this doctrine passively, as an hereditary faith, or have embraced it blindly, without investigation and reflection. It has often been charged with grossest absurdities and contradictions; but we may, surely, claim to know, quite as well as our opponents, how absurd and impossible it is. We know there are speculative difficulties connected with it, which we cannot solve. But is the doctrine of the divine unity, or any other of the divine attributes, thoroughly understood, or easily comprehensible, to a finite mind? We have been wont to suppose that the little word *God* covers up the profoundest mysteries. And well it may; for, if the created universe is full of mysteries, how much more incomprehensible to us must be the eternal Author! But do we think of denying the existence of a God, simply on account of these speculative difficulties? Neither, then, can we deny the fact of the divinity of Christ, since the proof of it is far too formidable; and the denial of it, so long as we cleave to the Bible, would only involve us in deeper mysteries. We, therefore, deem it safe for the spiritually-instructed believer to investigate the nature and grounds of this doctrine, and even to speculate on its chiefest difficulties, especially if he has first learned how difficult it is for a finite mind, by searching, to find out God.

But whatever may have been the origin and history of this doctrine, our readers will bear us witness that, thus far, we have mainly appealed "to the law and the testimony." And yet we seem scarcely to have glanced at this argument; since, in our view, it is spread out all over the inspired word, and

lies inwrought in its entire texture and substance.¹ Evidence enough, however, has been adduced, from the New Testament, to show that we have, in its pages, ample foundation and proof of the doctrine of the deity of Christ.

It is objected, however, that certain things are, in the New Testament, affirmed of Christians which, if taken absolutely, would also prove them divine. They are said, for example, to know all things, to possess all things, to do all things, to be filled with all the fulness of God, and to be partakers of the divine nature. But a slight examination of the passages where these expressions occur, will show us that they are so far defined and limited by their context, that no misapprehension could arise therefrom, even were we ignorant of the finite nature of man. It will, moreover, be acknowledged that some few, and not unimportant, things are said of Christ, in the scriptures, which are not and cannot be said of any human being. And here we would ask, if there does not lie, on the very face of the New Testament, manifest difference enough, in character, between the only begotten Son of God and ourselves, to indicate the possible necessity of attributing a higher meaning to these declarations concerning Christ? Certainly if the predicates referring to the Logos and Christ are not to be explained in accordance with the known or obviously revealed character of the subject, then we may go on, with the same principle, and prove from the Bible, that we are gods, or that God is like ourselves. A mere earthly naturalism or rationalism can, of course, see nothing more in Jesus of Nazareth than a man of the same nature and similarly begotten as ourselves; perhaps, also, a stern teacher of truth, a bold upbraider of unrighteousness, a Jewish Socrates it may be, though it has been well suggested that "if he were no more than a Socrates, then a Socrates he was not." Such naturalism, however, is, by its own nature and confession, wholly disqualified to be a fair interpreter of a revelation which is supernatural and divine.

¹ Σκοπὸς τοίνυν καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ἁγίας γραφῆς εἶναι, ὅτι τε αἰὲ θεὸς ᾗν, καὶ ὅτι ὕστερον δι' ἡμᾶς σάρκα λαβὼν, ἄνθρωπος γέγονε. — Athanasius.

It was not our purpose, in this brief treatise, to consider fully all those passages which are supposed, by some, to disprove the supreme divinity of Christ. If, however, in the person of Christ, the divine and human natures were united, then the arguments which go to prove his inequality with God while in the "days of his flesh," do not at all disprove the fact of his supreme and eternal divinity, any more than the arguments proving man to be a frail and dying creature, disprove the fact of his deathless nature and immortality. We hold, therefore, that the fact of Christ's real divinity and real humanity furnishes the only possible and consistent explanation of the seemingly contradictory representations of the being and character of our Lord. This two-fold character of Christ, and this alone, will satisfactorily explain how, as man and mediator, he can be represented as increasing in wisdom and stature, as wanting in perfect knowledge and goodness (?), as being inferior and subject to the Father, and, finally, as giving up the kingdom which he came to establish ; while, in respect to his more proper, original, and divine nature, he is, at the same time, and by the same scriptures, declared to be God, God over all, the author and sustainer of the universe, by whom and for whom all things were created, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and thus our Lord, and Saviour, and final Judge, to whom belongeth glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 06609 078 6

